



Legislation Text

File #: 18-2118, **Version:** 2

Resolution Providing Council Guidance on the Citizen Survey to Obtain Community Input on the Utilization of County Mental Health & Public Safety Millage Proceeds

Whereas, In November 2017, Washtenaw County voters approved an eight-year Mental Health & Public Safety Millage that will provide the City of Ann Arbor with \$2.2M annually in unrestricted revenue beginning in FY19, which after reflecting normal taxable value growth, will generate approximately \$20 million over the eight-year period;

Whereas, City Council adopted a resolution in September 2017 stating an intent to allocate the millage proceeds for affordable housing, climate action programs, and pedestrian safety, but the actual ballot language for the County's Mental Health & Public Safety millage proposal did not include any reference to those spending allocations;

Whereas, The results of a Citizens for Mental Health & Public Safety survey conducted subsequent to the millage vote as well as resident communications have demonstrated there was not a widespread understanding or clear, consensus expectation in the community regarding how these millage proceeds would be utilized;

Whereas, Based on the lack of a clear, consensus expectation on utilization of the proceeds, coupled with the magnitude of dollars involved, City Council concluded that obtaining additional community feedback and clarity is both necessary and appropriate;

Whereas, On November 19, 2018, City Council adopted resolution #18-1909 "Resolution to Conduct a Survey of Ann Arbor Residents to Assess Community Preferences Regarding the City's Spending of County Mental Health & Public Safety Millage Proceeds";

Whereas, Resolution 18-1909 directed the City Administrator and City CFO to design and conduct a scientifically-based and statistically valid follow-up survey of Ann Arbor residents only that is specifically focused on citizen preferences for utilization of the county millage proceeds at a cost not to exceed the balance of funds remaining in the \$50,000 FY19 line-item budget to obtain community input on budget and spending priorities;

Whereas, City staff have requested additional clarity from Council on the survey purpose, scope and approach prior to proceeding with design and implementation;

Whereas, To inform Council for its upcoming budget deliberations, Council desires statistically significant and valid input from residents on their preferences for how the proceeds should be utilized and Council believes that outcome can best be achieved through a closed survey that assesses preferences simply and directly rather than indirectly by attempting to revisit the November vote to assess voter intent or the extent voters were aware of the council resolution of intent; and

Whereas, The recently concluded citizen survey of overall City budget and spending priorities

provides useful insights in the development of this millage proceeds survey;

RESOLVED, That City Council provides the following general guidance for the survey:

- The survey should be closed in order to generate statistically valid results
- The survey should include a broad cross-section of Ann Arbor residents (not be limited to those voting in the November 2017 election) and be of sufficient size to be statistically significant
- The survey scope should be limited to soliciting input on use of the millage proceeds
- The survey should be simple, straightforward and provide a background and purpose statement similar in scope and content to the following:

“In November 2017, Washtenaw County voters passed a Mental Health and Public Safety Millage that allocates millage dollars back to jurisdictions with their own police forces. The dollars are not restricted/designated in any way and can be used by those jurisdictions as they decide. For the City of Ann Arbor, the new revenue stream is in excess of \$2M annually for eight years or about \$20M over the eight-year period.

The purpose of this survey is to obtain statistically valid community input with regard to how the new millage dollars should be spent. The responses will help inform Ann Arbor City Council as it establishes a City budget for fiscal year 2018-2019 and financial plan for fiscal year 2019-2020.”

- The survey choices should be defined, and at a minimum should include the program/service areas (1) identified most frequently as spending priorities in the recent general budget survey (2) listed in Council’s September 2017 resolution of intent and (3) identified in the title and text of the November 2017 millage proposal. Under these three criteria, the program service areas would include road re-surfacing and repair; affordable housing; safe drinking water initiatives; pedestrian safety improvements; climate action/energy efficiency programs; water and sewer infrastructure improvements; public safety; mental health/human service programs;
- The survey should provide a brief summary of current funding levels for the service areas included in the survey;
- The survey respondents could be asked to allocate by percentage (adding to 100%) how they believe the millage proceeds should be spent among the defined list of programs/service areas. An “other” category would provide respondents the opportunity to identify an area not listed;

RESOLVED, That consistent with these guidelines, City staff are requested and authorized to develop the specific design and format of the survey, the question(s) and the size and distribution of the survey; and

RESOLVED, That it is Council's expectation that the results of the survey will be available in February 2019.

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Lumm, Eaton, Bannister and Ramlawi

As Amended and Approved by Ann Arbor City Council on December 17, 2018.